

1<sup>st</sup> March 2022



### Official Information Act Request for – Code Red Days

I write in response to your Official Information Act request received by us 31<sup>st</sup> January 2022, you requested the following information:

- **This pertains to Counties Manukau DHB and the number of days spent in specific codes over the past year. Specifically I'm interest in days spent in Code Red (where a hospital is considered "extremely overloaded") and Code Black (where capacity issues are considered critical.) We'd like to know the following information -**
  1. **How many days, if any, did hospitals in CMDHB spend in Code Red from January 01 2021 – December 31 – 2021**
  2. **How many days, if any, did hospitals in CMDHB spend in Code Black from January 01 2021 – December 31 2021.**

### Counties Manukau Health Response:

For context Counties Manukau Health (CM Health) employs over 8,500 staff and provides health and support services to people living in the Counties Manukau region (approx. 601,490 people). We see over 118,000 people in our Emergency Department each year, and over 2,000 visitors come through Middlemore Hospital daily.

Our services are delivered via hospital, outpatient, ambulatory and community-based models of care. We provide regional and supra-regional specialist services i.e. for orthopaedics, plastics, burns and spinal services. There are also several specialist services provided including tertiary surgical services, medical services, mental health and addiction services.

Counties Manukau Health monitors in real-time the demand for hospital beds and capacity across the entire system, with a focus on maintaining availability and flow through the hospital. We manage staffing levels proactively to match clinical needs, safe skill mix and use of additional resources as required.

It is important to note that there is variation from average occupancy rate on an hourly, daily and seasonal basis, and for different clinical areas. In addition to this, each District Health Board has different parameters that determine occupancy and escalation levels. CM Health does specifically use a 'Code' system to determine occupancy however has a hospital status escalation tool where we consider red days where capacity being more than 90% and black days where capacity is over 100%.

Our Emergency Department works very hard to treat people without admission to the hospital where possible and where most appropriate for the patient e.g. we may work through a treatment plan that involves an urgent outpatient scan or appointment. This is important because it enables us to ensure that those requiring admission are able to be accommodated. High attendances in the ED may or may not result in more pressure on the hospital beds. This will be dependent on the type of conditions people present with.

1. How many days, if any, did hospitals in CMDHB spend in Code Red from January 01 2021 – December 31 – 2021
2. How many days, if any, did hospitals in CMDHB spend in Code Black from January 01 2021 – December 31 2021.

The table below reflects the occupancy of the combined ADULT inpatient Medical and Surgical resourced ward capacity across the 2021 year.

- We have categorised red days as days where combined occupancy in the adult Medical and Surgical wards is between 90%-100%.
- We have categorised black days as days where combined occupancy in the adult Medical and Surgical wards is over 100%.

Year	Activity Month	Avg. Daily Occupancy	Occupancy 90%-100% (Red Days)	Occupancy 100% + (Black Days)
2021	Jan	93.00%	25	-
	Feb	93.40%	24	-
	Mar	106.30%	-	31
	Apr	104.10%	4	26
	May	106.70%	-	31
	Jun	106.90%	1	29
	Jul	105.80%	-	31
	Aug	94.00%	5	15
	Sep	85.40%	4	-
	Oct	88.20%	10	-
	Nov	92.40%	25	-
	Dec	89.70%	20	-
	<b>Totals</b>	<b>97.16%</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>163</b>

I trust this information answers your request. You are entitled to seek a review of the response by the Ombudsman under section 28(3) of the Official Information Act. Information about how to make a complaint is available at [www.ombudsman.parliament.nz](http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz) or Freephone 0800 802 602.

Please note that this response or an edited version of this may be published on the Counties Manukau Health website. If you consider there are good reasons why this response should not be made publicly available, we will be happy to consider this.

Yours sincerely



**Dr Peter Watson**  
**Acting Chief Executive Officer**  
**Counties Manukau Health**